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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/076,209	02/14/2002	William J. Benton	00072CIP	8589

7590 08/01/2003

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EXAMINER

TUCKER, PHILIP C

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1712

DATE MAILED: 08/01/2003

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/076,209	BENTON ET AL. <i>A</i>
	Examiner Philip C Tucker	Art Unit 1712

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-16 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
 If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____. |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) <u>5-8</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1-4, 6, 8, 9 and 11-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Krieger (6422325).

Krieger teaches an oil based drilling fluid which comprises potassium formate and an emulsifier (see Table 1 and column 2, lines 38-60).

3. Claims 1-6, 9-11, 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Parlar et al (US 2001/0036905).

Parlar teaches a gravel packing well fluid which comprises an oil based fluid containing potassium and cesium formates, and a chelating agent which is an acid (paragraph 0062). Formic acid may be derivatized by synthetic methods to form the chelating agents. Applicants intended use as a drilling fluid does not distinguish over the prior art (In re Pearson 181 USPQ 641).

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4. Claims 1, 11, 12 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Dobson (5804535).

Dobson teaches a drilling fluid and method of drilling comprising using formate salts within the scope of the present invention (see examples and claims).

5. Claims 1, 11, 12 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Loftin (4440649).

Loftin teaches a drilling fluid and method of drilling comprising using formate salts within the scope of the present invention (see examples and claims).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1, 2 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Krieger (6422325) in view of Patel (6589917) and Santhanam (6339048).

Krieger teaches an oil based drilling fluid which comprises potassium formate and an emulsifier (see Table 1 and column 2, lines 38-60). Krieger differs from the present invention in that the use of a dimmer-trimer acid, an imidazoline or tall as surfactants are not disclosed. Krieger however teaches that the oil based emulsion is prepared with emulsifiers known to those skilled in the art. Patel teaches that

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surfactants such as imidazolines, tall oils and fatty acids may be used to formulate oil based drilling emulsions (column 9, lines 44-53). Santhanam teaches that emulsifiers such as tall oil may be used to formulate oil based emulsion drilling fluids (see formulation A). It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the emulsifiers taught by Patel and Santahnam in the oil based drilling fluid emulsion of Krieger, given the teaching of Krieger that such emulsions may be prepared using emulsifiers known to those skilled in the art.

8. As evidenced by the art of record, numerous patents anticipate claim 1, and the claims directly dependent therefrom. Numerous rejections were not made in order to avoid being repetitive.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Philip C Tucker whose telephone number is 703-308-0529. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, Flexible schedule.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert Dawson can be reached on 703-308-2340. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9310 for regular communications and 703-872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0651.

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Philip C Tucker
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1712

PCT-2853
July 28, 2003